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**For Immediate Release**

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**‘Dirty Bomb’ Exercise planned for Fairbanks area**

*State of Alaska, U.S. Department of Energy to test radiological readiness*

**CAMP DENALI, Alaska** -- The Alaska Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Services and the US Department of Energy will hold a radiological or “dirty” bomb training exercise near Livengood, Alaska on 21 October, 2003.

State and Federal officials plan to use a small amount of a radioactive isotope of the element iridium to simulate a radiological device. The commercially obtained iridium is a gamma emitter and is often used for non destructive inspection (NDI) of industrial welds and metal structural members – much in the way a medical x-ray is used to image a bone fracture.

The iridium is contained in a shielded container that can open to allow the radiation to emanate skyward. A US Customs Lockheed P-3 Orion surveillance aircraft on loan to the Department of Energy will hunt for the radiation source using onboard sensors. The four-engined P-3, operating from Eielson AFB near Fairbanks, is slated to fly the search missions at an altitude of 1000 feet.

“There is no radiation danger to the public from using the iridium during the exercise as it’s used all the time testing pipes and bridges,” said State Environmental Specialist Dennis Lundine, who is coordinating the exercise.

The P-3 will fly two search missions Tuesday. On Wednesday, the aircraft is slated to fly two additional missions that do not involve a radiation source and are intended to verify computer models dealing with a dirty bomb attack on the installation. Participating agencies have coordinated with the North Star Borough though it is not an active player in the exercise.

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***Note to Editors:*** Participants plan to shoot digital images of the aircraft and ground personnel during the exercise for dissemination Wednesday, 22 October 2003.